

## DETAILED ACTION

1. This office action is replacing the one dated on 10/09/07. Any confusion due to the previous action is regretted.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 16, 19, 22, 24, 26, 29-31, 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Chappuis [US 6,779,917].

Regarding claim 16, Chappuis discloses an assembly comprising an object [1, 2], a support [14] and, on said support, a fixing element [10, 11] for removably connecting said support to said object and defining a pivot axis between said object and said support, particularly in order to present alternately a first face [1] and a second face [2] of said support [abstract], said faces lying on either side of a mid-plane in the vicinity of said fixing element [figure 1], when said object and said support are mutually arranged in a first or second stable

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position, respectively, wherein said fixing element has a pivot comprising a body connected to said support [as shown in figure 1], and a base [end portion of 10 and 11] formed at its free end, and in that a cavity [32, 33] is formed on said object, said cavity comprising a first opening designed to allow said base to be inserted into said cavity and being continued by an elongate second opening [24, 25, 28, 29, 26, 27, 30] extending transversely with respect to the direction of said pivot axis and parallel to said mid-plane in a stable position, said elongate second opening being designed to guide said pivot and permit a relative movement of said object and of said support to bring them to a stable position, said support also comprising retractable locking means [6, 7] designed to engage with matching cavities in said stable position [column 4, lines 9-36].

Regarding claim 19, Chappuis discloses wherein said object is a watch case [abstract] comprising a middle [1, 2] in which two cavities [32, 33] are formed, and in that said support is a strap [14] having two free ends [10, 11], each carrying a fixing element.

Regarding claim 22, Chappuis discloses wherein said middle has lugs [18, 19, 22, 23] containing said cavities, and wherein said ball is retractable along an axis perpendicular to said pivot axis.

Regarding claim 24, Chappuis discloses wherein said pivot axis is situated halfway between said lugs [as shown in figure 1].

Regarding claims 26, 29, 30, Chappuis discloses wherein said watch case comprises two middles [1, 2] joined together.

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Regarding claims 31, 33, Chappuis discloses wherein said cavity is formed in a plate [1, 2] which is fixed to said object [as shown in figure 1].

### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

4. Claims 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 25, 27, 28, 32, 34, 35 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

### ***Conclusion***

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Kinkio et al. [US 2003/0002394] discloses a device for attaching wristband strands to a case; Munnier et al. [US 5,398,218] discloses connection of a band to a watch case; Saaski et al. [US 2005/0111306]; Chagnoux [US 6,176,612] discloses a method for attaching a watchband to a watch.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to THANH S. PHAN whose telephone number is (571)272-2109. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:00-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula Bradley can be reached on 571-272-2800 ext 33.

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The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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